

Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield Army Community Service Marketing Plan May 2010



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1.0 Executive Summary

Army Community Service (ACS), a Family, Morale, Welfare & Recreation (FMWR) facility, is a fully funded Department of Defense organization that provides the Army community real-life solutions to enhance quality of life. ACS offers training classes, one-on-one counseling, support groups, and Family advocacy to Active Duty, Retired, Reserve, and National Guards and their Family Members.

This marketing plan is designed to give Stewart/Hunter ACS a blueprint to successfully implement the standards of marketing, promotion, and advertising along with research and analysis that is required to ensure a seamless marketing program. We have included a market analysis, target market summaries, a SWOT analysis, web plan, and other relevant discussions.

Our ambitions for this marketing plan include:

- To position ourselves as a local organization, with strong ties to the community.
- Identify our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, & threat.
- Identify the local forces & target markets.

Our organization hopes this marketing plan creates a long-term model for our success.

2.0 Situation Analysis

Army Community Service serves as Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield's primary coordinating resource agency. ACS offers various community based services that foster growth, development, and readiness of Soldiers and Families assigned to the installation. We equip people with the skills and support they need to face challenges of military life today as well as tomorrow by offering free classes, workshops, and one-on-one counseling.

Our major programs are:

- Financial Readiness Program.
- Deployment and Readiness Program.
- Family Advocacy Program.
- Exceptional Family Member Program.
- Employment Readiness Program.
- Outreach Services (Family Welcome Center & Survival Outreach Service).
- Relocation Readiness Program.
- Army Family Team Building.
- Army Volunteer Corps.
- Information and Referral.
- Soldier and Family Assistance Center.

2.1 Market Needs

The value Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield Army Community Service (ACS) offers to the military community is immeasurable. The need is to have resources and information readily available and obtainable for successful Army life. ACS assists commanders in maintaining the readiness of Soldiers, Families, and the community by developing, coordinating, and delivering services to promote self-reliance, resiliency, and stability through our following programs: Army Family Action Plan (AFAP); Army Family Team Building (AFTB); Army Volunteer Corps (AVC); Deployment Readiness; Employment Readiness; Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP); Family Enrichment Center; Financial Readiness; Relocation Readiness (RELO); Information & Referral; Soldier, Family, Assistance Center (SFAC).

2.2 The Market

Army Community Service is a Department of Defense organization that offers array of comprehensive training to the Army Family. Our most important clients are the Soldiers and their Family Members. ACS offers real-life solutions for successful Army life during peace time and at war. ACS possesses good information about the market and knows a great deal about the common attributes of the different customers. We will leverage this information to better understand who is served, their specific needs, and how ACS can better meet their needs.

2.2.1 Market Trends

The Soldiers at Fort Stewart/Hunter are often deployed or redeploying. Army Community Service needs to make sure that the services we offer can meet the needs of Soldiers and Family Members whether it involves relationships, finances offered, or adjusting to a deployment cycle. ACS provides strategies to tackle these issues proactively and reactively.

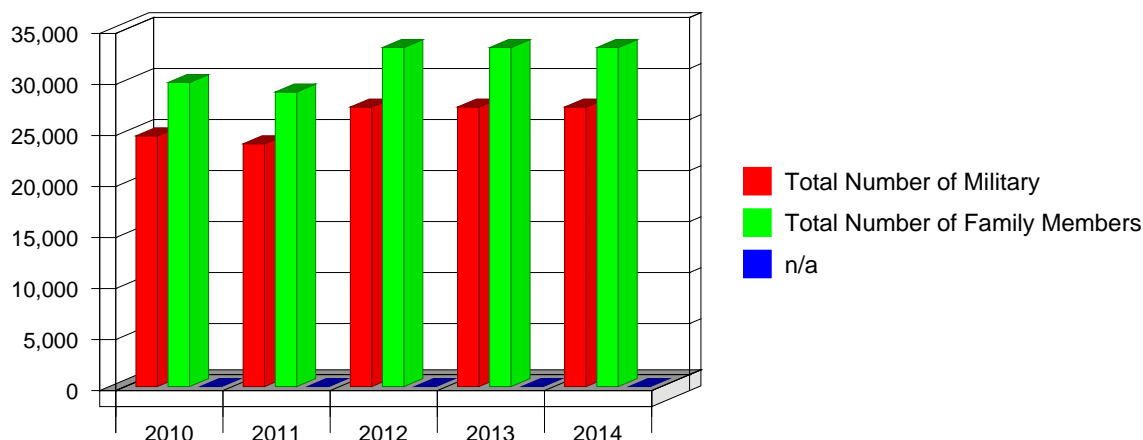
Here are examples of Army Family life situations that are directly correlated with deployments:

- Increase of abuse (child, domestic, and/or sexual).
- Increase in frivolous spending.
- Relationship strain (among husbands & wives and among parents & children).
- Increase in stress/anger.

The recent financial crisis has been considered by many economists to be the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The high unemployment rate, global housing bubble, and the decline of credit availability have also impacted the patrons of our installation. Our services can assist with counteracting the affects of this downturn on Army Family life.

The potential growth of our installation's population is projected to increase in the next several years, which will have an impact on our current trends.

Market Analysis (Trends)



2.2.2 Market Growth

The Soldier population at Stewart/Hunter consists of mostly young (ages 21 to 25) active duty, male and female, single and married Soldiers- both officers and enlisted; however, the enlisted population is considerably larger, and more than half of the Soldiers have children. Circumstances unique to our customers include frequent and extended periods of deployments, periodic heavy influx of Reserve Component units, and a high unemployment rate in this area. Customers live both on and off post, and a majority of them live here for less than one year. This created an ever-changing audience of newcomers who need to be informed about our ACS services, including command and leadership.

Stewart/Hunter reports show a small increase in the total number of military and Family Members. The following is projected:

FY 10

Total Number of Soldiers: 24,575

Total Number of Family Members: 29,800

FY 11

Total Number of Soldiers: 23,800

Total Number of Family Members: 28,870

FY 12

Total Number of Soldiers: 27,400

Total Number of Family Members: 33,230

FY 13

Total Number of Soldiers: 27,400

Total Number of Family Members: 33,230

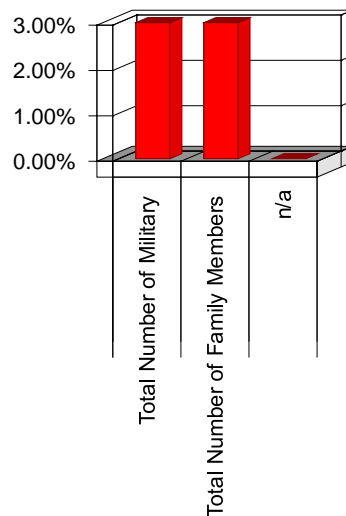
FY 14

Total Number of Soldiers: 27,400

Total Number of Family Members: 33,230

* It is worth noting that the marketing trends discussed in the previous topic point toward an increase need for services we provide due to the constant deployment and other social issues.

Market Analysis (C.A.G.R)



2.3 The Company

Army Community Service (ACS) is a Family, Morale, Welfare & Recreation (FMWR) entity that is customer-driven, proactive, and prevention-oriented. The people of ACS understand that Army communities are multi-generational, with needs that must be met on "their terms." From pioneer days to the Volunteer Army of the 80s, the concept of humanitarian concern for the welfare of others exists as a foundation of the Army way-of-life. A Volunteer spirit and the tradition of "caring for its own" are its characteristics. For years, Army wives operated lending closets, thrift shops, raised funds to help the needy, assisted in emergencies, taught and trained the inexperienced, provided care and comfort to the ill and bereaved and through a grassroots understanding of the Army community, contributed significantly to its stability. An adverse aspect of these social service activities often disappeared or stagnated when their originators transferred or left the service. In 1965, Army Community Service was officially born out of the need to eliminate this adverse aspect to a large extent and provide a flexible framework for the operation of a viable system of social services, requirements, resources of each local Army Community.

2.3.1 Mission

Army Community Service assists Soldiers and Families in maintaining readiness by coordinating and delivering comprehensive, responsive services that promote self-reliance, resiliency, and stability.

2.3.2 Service Offering

Army Community Service offers a broad range of programs and services dedicated to maintaining the readiness of Soldiers, Families, and communities. These services include:

- **Army Family Action Plan (AFAP)** is a grassroot, Army-wide initiative which provides a way for the Soldiers, Family Members, Retirees, and civilian employees to let the Army leadership know what works and what doesn't- and what they think will fix it.
- **Army Family Team Building (AFTB)** is a training and readiness program that provides participants with an understanding of Army culture and the skills and resources they need to become self-reliant, self-sufficient members of the military community. There are three levels of training based solely on an individual's experience in the Army.
- **Army Volunteer Corps (AVC)** works to promote and strengthen volunteerism by uniting community volunteer efforts, supporting professional management, enhancing volunteer career mobility, and establishing partnerships to support personal growth and life-long volunteer commitment.
- **Employment Readiness Program** provides information and referral services in employment, training, and volunteer opportunities to give participants the competitive edge needed to secure employment.
- **Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)** is a mandatory enrollment program that works with other military and civilian agencies to provide comprehensive and coordinated community support, housing, education, medical, and personnel services to Families with

special needs.

- **Family Advocacy Program (FAP) or Family Enrichment Center** is committed to strong Army Families, and the prevention and treatment of Family violence. Its coordinated efforts are designed to prevent and intervene in cases of Family distress, and to promote healthy Family life. The FAP Installation Victim Advocate is on-call 24 hours/day to provide advocacy and support for domestic violence and sexual assault victims (active duty or civilian). New Parent Support Program (NSPS) consists of licensed professionals providing supportive and caring services to military Families with children from birth to 36 months.
- **Information & Referral (I&R)** provides information to Soldiers, Family Members, and civilians regarding both military and civilian agencies available. A comprehensive resource file, Military One Source and other reference materials will help clients find the appropriate resources. I&R also refers clients to the appropriate agencies by providing contact information such as phone numbers, address, point of contact, and hours of operation.
- **Financial Readiness Program** offers education, counseling, and support services to assist Soldiers and their Families with their financial affairs, including Budget Counseling, Debt Liquidation, Financial Education, Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance, and Army Emergency Relief.
- **Mobilization & Deployment Program or Family Readiness Program** provides support service in personal reconstruction, Family reunion and personal readiness during disaster events and all phases of deployment to Soldiers, Family Members, and civilians.
- **Relocation Readiness Program** offers useful information and classes to help answer the questions clients may have about their new home and provide information for their next duty station. Workshops, counseling, and support focus on pre-move planning, moving, and settling into a new community.
- **Soldiers & Family Assistance (SFAC)** provides guidance, assistance, information & referral, linkage to health care, employment & education services, and other support agencies to facilitate the Wounded Soldier's rapid recovery.

2.3.3 Positioning

Army Community Service offers real-life solutions to enhance the lives of Active Duty, Retired, Reserve, and National Guard Soldiers and their Family Members with classes, workshops, and counseling. Whether a client needs help with his or her finances, have questions about moving issues, need advice about his or her relationship, need assistance finding a job, have questions about volunteering opportunities, or just need to talk to someone about difficulties during deployment life in the Army, ACS has qualified staff ready to serve and support.

2.3.4 SWOT Summary

The following SWOT analysis captures the key strengths and weaknesses within the organization, and describes the opportunities and threats facing Army Community Service.

2.3.4.1 Strengths

The organization's strengths are below:

- The diversity of services/education that ACS offers.
- The number of professional staff.
- Expertise and continual training of the staff.
- Some staff members are former Soldiers (know the procedure/process of the Army and understand the way of life for our clients)
- Services are free of charge for clients.
- Easy to register for classes (ability to register for classes through several channels including through units, FRSA, and soon online).
- Fully funded by the U.S. government (CAT A Facility).
- Communication flow with Stewart/Hunter Command and ACS.
- Centrally located on both posts.

2.3.4.2 Weaknesses

ACS weaknesses are:

- Under utilization of our services by the community.
- Low class attendance.
- Continual deployment rotation.
- Lack of overall funding at the garrison (affects training and over-time which consequently affects the services we provide).
- Clients/community do not know all that ACS offers.
- The geographic distance between Stewart/Hunter could cause a breakdown of communication.
- Scheduling conflict (classes, location, and last minute).

2.3.4.3 Opportunities

Opportunities are:

- Find more effective marketing channels to better reach target market.
- Cross training of staff.
- Get community more involved with ACS.
- Team building exercise.
- Utilize more Public Affairs Office resources (i.e. more commercials on TV).

2.3.4.4 Threats

Threats are:

- Army budget cuts.
- A lack of utilization of our facility by clients could lead to cuts in ACS staff & services.
- A few disgruntle staff members.

2.4 Competition

Being a fully funded Department of Defense organization for the Army community, as a whole, Army Community Service does not have direct competition. No other agency offers the same array of "FREE" programs and serves to maintain the readiness of Soldiers, Families, and communities as we do. However, individually, some of our programs do have direct competition.

- **Financial Readiness Program** offers free financial education, counseling, and support services to resolve financial issues with an emphasis on financial literacy and self-sufficiency. Various off-post agencies do provide the same services as Financial Readiness, however, usually at a monetary cost.
- **Employment Readiness Program** is a program dedicated to assisting military spouses in their job search. Employment Readiness provides assistance with employment information, employment referral assistance, resume writing, volunteer opportunities, and educational opportunities. Employment Readiness has several on and off post competitors including the Georgia Department of Labor.
- **Family Advocacy Program or Family Enrichment Center** is dedicated to the prevention, education, prompt reporting, investigation, and intervention & treatment of spouse and child abuse. The program provides a variety of services to Soldiers and Families to enhance their relationship skills and improve their quality of life. Clients can find these or some of these services at different on and off post organizations.
- **Army Family Team Building (AFTB)** is a volunteer led program with a central tenet: provide training and knowledge to spouses and Family Members to support the total Army efforts. AFTB offers free training to prepare Army Families for success. AFTB competitors consist of online classes given by other Army organizations.
- **Army Volunteer Corps** enhances effective recruitment, training, recognition, logistical support for use of volunteers. Our clients have various opportunities to volunteer with other organizations on and off post.

3.0 Marketing Strategy

Soldiers:

Army Community Service will target Soldiers through building stronger relationships with Stewart/Hunter Command, use different advertising ploys, and word-of-mouth advertising.

Family Members:

The Army recognizes that Soldiers' Families are an integral part of the Army Family and taking care of them is as important as taking care of the Soldiers' themselves. Not only will we try to reach Family Members through advertising, we will also try to reach them through direct marketing, FRGs, and word-of-mouth.

3.1 Value Proposition

Army Community Service (ACS) offers free programs and services dedicated to maintaining the readiness of Active Duty, Retired, Reserve, and National Guard Soldiers and their Family Members. (Department of Defense civilian employees can also be eligible for most services.) The benefit of utilizing ACS programs and services is that we offer real-life solutions to any issues related to daily life, including finances, enhancing relationships, providing support to Family Members with special needs, providing support during all phases of the deployment cycle, offering the competitive edge needed to secure employment for Family Members, providing counseling and relocation planning assistance, and much more at no monetary cost for patrons.

3.2 Critical Issues

Our major issue to face is under utilization of our services by the community. We have a solid foundation of dedicated, well trained staff members, but ACS depends on services being significantly used by the community. If the usage of our facility does not increase, there is a possibility that some of our services will be cut. However, with the combined experience, education, and dedication of our organization, we can implement plans and strategies that will increase community participation.

3.3 Financial Objectives

Army Community Service is a fully funded Department of the Army organization. Our financial objective is to spend the allocated monies wisely to meet the needs of our customers by providing services they need to be mission ready.

3.4 Marketing Objectives

ACS marketing objectives are:

- Continue to build brand awareness so that the community is fully aware of the services we provide.
- Continue to communicate our strategic objectives to our target markets effectively.
- Build a stronger working relationship with command so that they will continue to refer

their Soldiers to ACS not only for corrective assistance (when an issue has arisen) but for preventive assistance (before situation becomes an issue).

- Increase class attendance and one-on-one counseling by 2% a fiscal year.

3.5 Target Market Strategy

Our primary target markets are:

1. Active Duty Soldiers.
2. Family Members.
3. Army National Guards/Reserves.

Active Duty Soldiers- In line with the Army and FMWR's (Family Morale, Welfare & Recreation) commitment, our primary mission is to take care of Soldiers and their Family Members. Our mission is to provide services to support the readiness of Soldiers and to promote self reliance, resiliency, and stability.

Family Members- With the Army's recognition of the importance of the taking care of Soldiers' Families, ACS aims to provide Family Members with the necessary information, tools, and resources to connect with the Army, and to benefit from our many programs.

Army National Guards/Reserves- Due to frequent deployment and redeployment, there has been an increase of National Guards and Reserves that fall indirectly under Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield. As Stewart/Hunter serves as a hub for their deployment, Army National Guards/Reserves and their Families can utilize Stewart/Hunter services during their tour to theater though they may permanently belong to a different garrison/community.

3.6 Messaging

The core message of Army Community Service is one of value: ACS offers solutions for successful Army living whether it's regarding finances, moving, relationships, parenting, job seeking, volunteering, or difficulties dealing with deployment. Our strengths are the diversity of services and the expertise of our staff.

3.6.1 Branding

Army Community Service brand communicates our complete commitment to the total Army life. The brand embodies the values of self-reliance, resiliency, and stability with our flexible system of social services and resources to our Army community. We need to also convey our services as a proactive entity more so than reactive entity to help achieve a more mission ready Army.

4.0 Marketing Mix

Army Community Service will continue to focus on building a loyal based of clients who will utilize our services. ACS marketing mix is comprised of the following approaches to advertising and customer service.

- Advertising- ACS will use several different methods of advertising.
- Customer Service- Superior customer service is imperative.

4.1 Product Marketing

The service we provide is a key to our markets. We need to fulfill the promise we make to the Stewart/Hunter Army community- equip clients with the knowledge and the necessary resources needed for relocating, providing Family Members with employment assistance, getting involved in the community, managing deployment & separation, learning for Army life, enhancing relationships, and/or making sound financial decisions.

4.2 Promotion

Our most successful advertising and promotion in the past have been through the following:

- Community Newspaper- Frontline
- Television- Marne TV
- Email Newsletter- Distributed to all computer users by Public Affairs
- Weekly MWR Newsletter- CNN Newsletter distributed to all FRGs and community organizations
- Print Material
- ACS Quarterly Newsletter- Available online
- Informational Display Table- ACS display set up at community events or in high traffic areas (i.e., PX and Commissary)
- Webpage- ACS page on the Team Stewart website

4.2.1 Advertising

Army Community Service advertising strategy includes the community newspaper, community TV channel, Marne Message email, MWR community newsletter, ACS quarterly newsletter, community leaders packet, print material (brochures, posters, & fliers), in-house displays, banners, and electronic marquee.

4.2.2 Public Relations

Army Community Service will continue to maintain an excellent rapport with the Public Affairs Office (PAO). Public Affairs gives ACS a free page called "the ACS Briefs" in the weekly military community newspaper and provides free space for articles & feature stories. In the future, ACS Marketing would like to revamp the ACS Briefs to make it more eye appealing and increase the number of articles.

Army Community Service would like to make its presence more prominent in the community via public relations play. Though we presently have Power Point slides and information as tickers on the military infomercial channel called Marne TV, ACS would like to also increase the number of ACS public service announcements & commercials and increase the number of commercials on the ACS webpage.

4.2.3 Direct Marketing

With direct marketing growing exponentially, ACS will look at employing this marketing vehicle even more. Presently, ACS information is sent out via email as Marne Messages to all computer users; all Marne Messages are then posted on Facebook. We also have a page in the MWR Community News & Notes (CNN), which is sent out via email to FRGs and other organizations.

In the future, ACS will explore the following to directly reach its target market:

- Distribution of the ACS quarterly newsletter to individuals requesting a copy via email.
- Set up an ACS display table at various large community events and in high traffic areas such as the PX and Commissary.
- Explore the possibility of creating and disseminating ACS doorknob hangers (with important ACS info).

4.3 Web Plan

Our webpage is on the Team Stewart website. It provides detailed information about all our programs and classes (dates, times, and descriptions). Recently added to the site is the ACS quarterly newsletter, which can be downloaded and printed.

ACS Marketing is presently working with the webmaster to revamp the site to give it an updated look and feel. Also, online class registration will soon be incorporated for easier accessibility.